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ABSTRACT

The curriculum guide for the French communications course is provided by Nova Scotia's secondary schools for students not wishing to complete the core French curriculum. A program giving experience in French communication useful for employment and leisure and allowing for flexibility in high school course selection is outlined. Its objectives include: (1) provision of a predominantly oral program with limited objectives for written expression; (2) a re-entry point for students having previously dropped a language course; (3) initial entry for high school students; (4) opportunity for student self-motivation; and (5) linguistic, historical, and cultural appreciation of French-based culture. The guide outlines recommendations for developing language skills at this level (listening, speaking, limited writing and reading, and grammar) and suggestions for teachers concerning course level descriptions for grades 9-12. Other areas discussed include a comparison of the phonetic and phonological components of the communications course and the core program, possible areas of coordination between materials used for the core program and those used for the communications program, and a list of useful supplementary materials. (MSE)

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FRENCH -- COMMUNICATIONS

Guidelines for the Teacher

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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

It is desirable that every student who graduates from high school in Nova Scotia should be bilingual. Future citizens of Canada ought to be able to communicate with their French-speaking fellow citizens. Desirable as bilingualism may be, however, it is an unrealistic goal for teachers of Communications courses in Nova Scotia at the present time. Teachers of Communications courses should not aim too high, nor be too easily discouraged -- and it is important that everyone realize this at the outset. The aim, then, should be something less than bilingualism; but, if less than this, precisely what should it be?

It may be useful, at this point, to examine a possible interpretation of the term bilingualism. In the February 1976 issue of the Canadian Modern Language Review, H.H. Stern makes reference to the Gillin report in his discussion of the topic:

> "The Gillin Report has tried to remedy this failure to clarify objectives. It sets out from the assumption that educators, parents and students do not necessarily demand that the same level of bilingualism be reached by all. Consequently, it proposes three levels as possible goals. On the basis of these proposals, it can be argued that every educated English-speaking Canadian should reach a level of basic competence in French, and acquire a minimum knowledge about French-speaking people and their culture, so as to be able to live with understanding in a bilingual country in which French and English are official languages, and so that the student can take up French again later in life if he wants or needs it. This would be part of the basic literacy I mentioned earlier. The next "middle" level, envisaged by the Report, would serve those students who would like a working knowledge of French. This knowledge, which would include basic literacy, would consist of a useful command of the language for reading, for listening to the radio and for talking to French-speaking Canadians. In short, it would meet communicative needs in common contact situations. The third and "top level" would incorporate the other two but, going further, would enable the individual to become a quasi-native speaker, a "bilingual" in the popular sense, who can function effectively in the second language. The levels of competence in a language need defining in greater detail, of course, than I have done here. But I have given an indication of what might be described as a three-level approach to objectives of language learning: near-native bilingualism, working knowledge, and basic level."

As indicated in the first paragraph, it is questionable whether a reasonable level of bilingualism may be achieved by all students in Nova Scotia at this time, in particular in Communications classes. Certain conditions which exist in our schools make it very difficult for this most desirable aim to be achieved. The teacher's careful planning will need to compensate for such problems as classes with heavy enrolment, lack of a period of daily exposure to the language, and the fact that students have little or no practise in the target language outside the classroom environment. Moreover, the often less than enthusiastic response to bilingualism on the part of parents, the media and the general public tends to lower student motivation.

While some students drop French programs because of difficulty with the language, insufficient time to study it in depth or a very heavy work load in other subjects, it would appear that other factors too may be involved in this decision. In his studies on motivation, Lambert has shown that a strong correlation exists between the students' desire to identify with the language community and his success in learning the language. The possibility may also exist that such factors as career orientation may influence this success. However, it is fairly obvious to teachers, administrators, and most people who work with students that they are generally not willing to continue in a program where they do not reach a reasonable level of achievement on a short term and a regular basis.

For many students the rather rigid requirements of a Core program may undermine their motivation. Since they cannot perform at the expected level, failure leads to discouragement and to more failure. They often give up the effort to achieve because of the frustration they experience in this whole effort. It is, therefore, important that a French program more adequately related to their needs be available to them. This program should provide a valid experience in communications skills so that students' performance level may be both accepted and valued. Moreover, the provision of a language program related to communication skills useful for employment and leisure allows for greater flexibility in course selection at the high school level. Such provision is only reasonable in the light of answering a broader spectrum of students' needs.

Aims of French Communications

Grades 9-12

AIMS OF FRENCH COMMUNICATIONS GRADES 9-12

1. To provide a predominantly oral program with rather limited objectives for written expression, which would give students (such as those specified in Aims 2, 3, 4) who elect to follow it, a preparation in French which is more appropriate to their needs than they could acquire by following the CORE program in French.

2. To provide an opportunity to improve (oral) communication skills in French for those students who do not have the time in addition to their classroom hours to meet the requirements of the core program in French.

3. To provide an alternative program from the program of the junior high grades for those students who, havingencountered difficulty, need more intensive work opportunity in spoken French, starting from a very basic and minimal point.

4. To provide a re-entry program for students who drop a language course and subsequently express an interest in re-entering a language program.

5. To provide an initial entry program for students who are at the high school level.

6. To provide a program for the students to work at their own levels, which will thus engender through satisfaction of accomplishment a SELF-MOTIVATING influence on performance.

7. To provide a program which will give students the opportunity to study the linguistic concepts of the language, to appreciate the cultural and literary heritage of the people who speak the language and to become aware of their social patterns -- both historically and in the contemporary milieu.

Skill Development

Introduction

The Aural Skills

Characteristics of "Special Effort"

Developing Listening Skill in Small Groups

Speaking

The Written Skills

Reading and Writing as Support Skills

Reading for Communication

Writing

Grammar

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

There are various ways to assess the relative importance of the four traditional skills. The first one is to consider their potential usefulness for communication in real life. A survey made some years ago "estimates that, of the time adults spend in communication activities, 45% is devoted to listening, only 30% to speaking, 16% to reading and a mere 9% to writing" from P.T. Rankin "Listening ability: Its Importance, Measurement and Development" quoted in W.M. Rivers. This estimate is still largely valid. It can be adjusted in two ways: A student of French in an English speaking area will be placed only occasionally in an authentic interactional situation and will be likely to make more use of listening and reading, less of speaking. The importance of skills must also be taken into account as learning devices in a classroom situation -- i.e. reading and writing are used as support skills, some activities are more motivating than others, some are easier to handle in large classes. In the classroom context skills are not independent entities: students listen, speak and write in French. The practice of each skill contributes to the learning of the second language as a whole and the final goal is their integration in a global communicative competence.

Moreover, we all know that it is hardly possible to isolate and practice one skill at a time but that some situations and some activities permit emphasis on one or two of them.

Nevertheless, it is convenient to study these different skills by an assumed order of importance.

The aural skills

Aural comprehension is statistically the most important of the four skills. In Canada a minimal acceptable level of bilingualism has sometimes been defined as one where each Canadian could speak his/her own language and understand the other official language. In the classroom, aural comprehension can be the object of rewarding and motivating activities and it allows some form of individualization even at an early stage.

One of the normal uses of aural comprehension is in direct interaction with a French speaking person, as part of a discussion, for receiving directions and instructions or for obtaining information for instance. An acceptable objective could be defined as "the ability to get the sense of what an educated native says when he is making a special effort to be understood and when he is speaking on a general and familiar subject." (PMLA)

This statement contains the essence of what teachers of Communications French courses should aim at. But before teachers attempt to fulfill these aims it is of the utmost importance that they grasp the principles on which these aims are predicated. For instance, teachers should realize what happens when someone makes a special effort to be understood. This is an especially

important principle because it will directly influence the teacher's idea of how high or low the main objective of the course ought to be.

Characteristics of "special effort"

B. 1. Simplification - All adornment, all matter extraneous to the gist of the message is eliminated.

2. Fragmentation - Speech is broken down into segments of thought, not individual words, but the minimum phrases which communicate the desired meaning briefly and plainly.

3. Repetition - Simplified fragments are spoken several times. A significant amount of repetition may be almost synonymous with "special effort" in the mind of the speaker trying to get a message across.

4. Clear Enunciation -

5. Body Language - Even in normal speech, gesture and body language are used to aid communication. These non verbal clues play a greater role when less reliance can be placed upon oral communication.

These five characteristics of "special effort" should form the basis of the way in which the teacher plans to achieve the detailed goals of aural comprehension in Communications French courses.

It should be understood that rapid-fire speech is out of the question, but "making a special effort to be understood" should not be equated with speaking slowly. Slow speech is not among the most significant characteristics of "special effort", and care should be taken not to convey a distorted idea of pronunciation by exaggerated slow speech.

In summary, a teacher should aim toward having the student understand the plain, brief phrase or segment of thought distinctly spoken at more or less normal speed, with the limited aid of gestures and body language.

No textbook has been specifically designed with such a program in mind. There are recommended textbooks which can certainly be a great help, but teachers must be prepared to pick and choose their own course content. The following guidelines should help:

In planning the details of course content, the teacher should consider the following factors (probably in this order):

(1) Student Level: What content is best suited to the student's age, grade level, achievement level, and sociological interests.

(2) Practical Situation: Which situations which could be reconstructed in the classroom would encourage and motivate the student to develop his ability to comprehend spoken French? For instance, the student could be prepared to serve a French-speaking customer in a restaurant or service station. Situations which involve: a French visitor, tourist or customer, a French friend or team mate; emergencies; how to follow instructions in French; understanding French culture, current events, songs, etc.; television, are especially recommended.

(3) Linguistic Need: The teacher should analyze what needs to be communicated in the situations chosen, and aim for aural comprehension of these needs. Practical situations place a special importance upon such language elements as numbers and the ability to count out change in French. A special plea might also be made for the importance of the student learning how to spell his name using the French alphabet.

(4) Vocabulary and Phrase Format: Analysis of linguistic needs leads naturally into identifying the necessary vocabulary and the simplified framework for communicating it. For instance, in serving a French-speaking customer in a service station, a student obviously needs to recognize the difference between a request for five gallons of gas, and five dollars worth of gas. It might be especially useful if the student could recognize words such as "gallon" and "dollar" which are similar in both French and English (spoken, of course, with a French accent) and which French speakers normally use in practical situations.

(5) Methodology: Content and method cannot be considered as strictly separate categories. A student should be able to understand the French of "everyday situations" - presumably the situations in which he may be faced with having to understand French - greetings, prices in a store, street directions, etc. (Quel temps fait-il? is one of the sentences he is less likely to hear.) However, listening comprehension is a skill to be developed, rather than a simple list of phrases to be memorized and the teacher has to attempt to develop that skill in the classroom situation using whatever works best in that situation.

Because aural comprehension is a skill rather than a simple mastery of a limited content, the development of the student's self confidence is of great importance and he must be given many opportunities to understand French so that he may have proof that he has correctly understood.

This requires extensive practice which cannot be done practically in interactive situations. The teacher has to rely on other types of activities corresponding to (some) other real life situation(s) such as listening to the radio, watching a play or a film or a show on TV. There is an abundance of useful recordings available, including songs and the listening exercises found in various recommended curriculum materials. (see section "suggestions for the teacher")

Most of this material is not graded and is too difficult to understand as is. The teachers can adapt it in many ways to the level of their students. They can set limited objectives at first, such as identifying familiar names in a short sequence, later understanding a sentence, than answering a few questions (in English) on a short paragraph etc. They will also prepare the listening exercise with the students making sure, for instance, that students can identify the key words crucial for general comprehension. The aim is to practice a skill not to teach vocabulary. With such precautions it is possible to use interesting and challenging material, and give the student a real feeling of achievement, that of cracking the code.

Wherever one or more tape recorders are available to the students, the teacher can prepare graded listening kits for individualized instruction. Each kit will contain a carefully selected and edited document accompanied by taped and/or written preparation and a set of questions. Students thus

can work in their own style at their own pace and this allows for self-instruction, remedial work or enrichment. It is also possible to devise team activity such as the listening "unipac" described by Grittner[1] pg. 193.

Developing Listening Skill in Small Groups

Sample Lesson: "The Mission Impossible" Assignment

Equipment needed: A portable cassette playback machine with good fidelity. (A portable open-reel tape recorder will also work for the purpose of this exercise.)

Materials Needed: A prerecorded tape by one or more native speakers that is slightly above the listening comprehension capabilities of the students in the exercise. Ideally, it should be five to ten minutes in length. The voices should be lively and natural. The material should be of high interest to the age group for which it is intended and there should be a definite beginning and end to the selection.

Technique: The class is broken into groups of three to five students. Each group must have access to the cassette player or tape player and must have an area where they can work effectively in a small-group situation. Each group elects a team leader for the "mission". Students know in advance that a prize will be awarded for the best fulfillment of the language mission. (The prize should be something humorous rather than something of great monetary value.) The teacher prepares an "assignment" tape in advance and makes enough copies for each group. The teacher's own voice is used for this purpose. The instructions on the tape may be either in English or in the target language, depending on the language level of the students.

> Sample test: Hello. This is your teacher. The mission for this grading period -- should you choose to accept it -- is to transcribe and interpret a message that has been intercepted from a foreign power. The message is in French. Listen to the entire tape through to the end once or twice to get the general idea. After that, your team leader will play short segments, rewinding the tape as often as necessary, so that you can transcribe the message into writing. You may use a dictionary or other available resources. Each member of the group may wish to produce his or her own version of the message first. In the end, the purpose is to come up with a single text that represents the consensus of the group. The final part of the mission is to answer as accurately as possible the questions that are enclosed with the taped message.
>
> Should your team be captured by the building principal, I will disavow all knowledge of this assignment. The tape will not self-destruct in ten seconds: the school district cannot afford to burn up tapes in that manner. Furthermore, there is a school board regulation against smoking on school property. Good luck with your mission.
>
> (End of Tape)

Speaking

Learning to speak a second language is a very difficult task. One of the most common complaints expressed at all levels is that students cannot speak or will not speak. This is, nevertheless, an essential element of all parts of a direct method approach, and it is also essential to a communication program.

In class, oral activities consist mostly of repetition of model dialogues, and the practice of well delineated and structured exercises (pattern drills and others) which can be done in unison. The stated objectives are to deal with a few difficulties at a time, so as to do them well and to give all students the maximum "speaking" time, hence the unison work. Quantitatively students do a lot of "speaking", but this is merely oral practice in a well defined and safe area, not speaking for communication.

When a student has to express himself spontaneously in a real unanticipated situation this is a different matter. He has to retrieve at once the sounds, grammatical forms, syntactical order and vocabulary he needs from his total knowledge of the language. This is complicated by the fact that the unusual situation generally creates anxiety which further inhibits him. Apart from the learning of vocabulary, grammar, etc. learning to speak spontaneously is a skill in itself. Since this skill is difficult to master and to practice, teachers should be quite realistic in their objectives and be satisfied when there is communication even with many imperfections, but yet try to give their students every opportunity to practice this activity.

A communication program can limit itself to "survival" objectives: how to cope with situations such as: the restaurant, the store, the service station, asking for directions, etc. This is certainly useful in the long term and can be the object of stimulating activities in the classroom. But many of these situations are of limited interest for the student. They are also often too difficult to enact during the first years. Instead of limiting activities to "useful" simulation, teachers should try to give students, from the very beginning, every opportunity to use the language in a personal, spontaneous way.

Most of the recommended curriculum material includes sections leading to some degree of free expression (i.e. personalized questions) which are to be fully exploited, making sure that students get used to asking questions themselves.

In order to encourage free expression teachers can systematically set aside some time in each period for free communication. But then free expression will not just happen; it will have to be motivated. Again some curriculum materials have sections very suitable for that purpose.

Most important are the teachers' attitudes during this time. They must try to develop in their students, a habit of innovation and experimentation with the new language and there is nothing more inhibiting than constant correction. The teachers are not judges but animators and resource persons; they can note for themselves the most frequent mistakes for remedial work later. To comfort teachers who hesitate to allow their students to make mistakes in free expression here is a transcription of a passage:

> De même que, je me permets, tenez, excusez-moi, une idée qui me vient à laquelle je tiens assez, il existe un Français, un Français moyen, Français moyen, de cette région en particulier, mettez un Français de Paris, un Français est toujours un être double, pourquoi, pourquoi à votre avis, pourquoi sommes-nous doubles dans le tempérament, dans la façon de penser, pourquoi est-ce que un Français est toujours un être double? Il y a plus ou moins de ceci et plus ou moins de cela ... et tous les Français on a un, entre nous une dose plus ou moins grande d'homme du nord et d'homme du midi, voyez-vous.
>
> A.M. Rivers[2] pg. 55

What level of correct speech can we expect from our students?

The first question we must ask ourselves is: How does a native speaker frame his utterances when he is thinking only of expressing his meaning?

It is clear that we cannot expect our students to speak French always in well-formed sentences in the heat of personal expression, when they do not do so in their native language. We must also expect students to hesitate, restructure sentences, and make sudden changes of lexical choice which may temporarily affect agreements of person and gender in the immediate vicinity. These imperfections are important only if they affect comprehensibility.

The written skills

The written code represents new areas of difficulty superimposed on the oral code.

According to statistical surveys, written skills rank second in real life use, well behind the oral skills, and the communication program is a predominantly oral program. Yet they function in the classroom as indispensable support skills and as such are integrated with the oral skills in practically all curriculum materials. They also stand in their own right as useful communicative skills: some situations demand reading or writing. This is especially true for students of French in an English speaking milieu. They are indispensable for eventual students planning to join the Core stream -- the academic world is predominantly a written world, and besides, as they lend themselves easily to individualized instruction they are adaptable to these students' broader needs.

Reading and writing as support skills

When they arrive at junior high school, students have already become dependent on the English writing system as a memory aid and as a learning tool. Accordingly, with most language methods reading and writing are introduced very early (level 1 of Passeport and Ici On Parle Français) as outlined in various teacher's reference guides.

Teachers have to be very careful in this area:

-- French and English use the same written symbols so habits of reading in the first language lead to serious mispronunciations even when reading silently (subvocalization).

-- All initial reading has to be recognition reading of already orally mastered material.

-- Special attention must be paid to specific areas of difficulty. At the phonemic level, systematic studies of graphie des sons (IOPF type) are necessary. Also be aware of supra segmental differences: rhythm, stress, intonation.

Careful work at this stage will save much effort and frustration later: habits are easier to form than to change.

It will be good to point out the differences between the written code and the oral code (unpronounced letters, mark of the plural, etc.)

There is room for a variety of parallel activities such as crossword puzzles, "le mot caché", scrambled letters and scrambled sentences, etc.

Reading for Communication

Careful introduction to and use of reading as a support skill progressively leads students to a stage where they can read materials not presented orally.

Ultimately all activities should be directed towards natural use of reading -- Why do we read normally? WMR[3] - pg. 171.

1. because we want information for some purpose or are curious about some topic;

2. because we need instructions to perform some task for our work or for our daily life (we want to know how an appliance works, we are interested in a new recipe, we have forms to fill in.);

3. because we want to act a play, play a new game, do a puzzle, or carry out some other activity which is pleasant and amusing;

4. because we want to keep in touch with friends by correspondence or understand business letters;

5. because we want to know when or where something will take place or what is available (we consult timetables, programs, announcements and menus, or we read advertisements);

6. because we want to know what is happening or has happened (we read newspaper, magazine, reports);

7. because we seek enjoyment or excitement (we read novels of all kinds, short stories, poems, words of songs).

Activities for developing reading skills should exploit these natural desires and impulses, preferably by supplying something which cannot be readily obtained in the native language: something which is interesting, amusing, exciting, useful, or leads to pleasurable activities.

This is a fairly exhaustive list and it is not to be assumed that all students will be interested in all of these activities. A wide variety of reading materials should be available to them to choose from. This material should be interesting for teenagers but not too difficult. Students who have to plod their lonely way through a literary text or even a difficult or long newspaper article will soon lose interest.

This creates problems at the intermediate stage where there is a large discrepancy between the relative intellectual sophistication of the students and their linguistic abilities. Teachers can choose from the readings in currently recommended curriculum materials -- They can also use special readers such as "Textes en français facile".

More advanced students can use, whenever possible, authentic documents: magazines, newspapers, brochures, books ... Again it is important that the choice of readings available present a scale of level of difficulty, and that they cover as many fields of interest as possible. Reading is the most suitable activity for individualized work and enrichment. This applies not only to students likely to transfer to the Core program. Many students, not very proficient orally -- for various reasons -- will enjoy reading even a difficult text if it is interesting for them. Motivation, however, will quickly vanish if the task is too difficult. Teachers must be available for help from time to time. They must also train students in the proper use of the dictionary and the art of educated guessing with team work, for instance, where students can share their ingenuity and test their guesses against each other, under the teacher's supervision. Team activities can range from a basic game, to the actual building of something, using French instructions. Some "Bibliothèques du Travail" can be most useful for this purpose.

Reading aloud: Since most students have trouble standing in front of the class and reading aloud in English, French teachers should not be too demanding in this area. Besides, this skill is of secondary usefulness.

Writing

In this program, writing is mostly used as a support skill. As such it can be introduced conjointly with reading if the same precautions are taken. It can be used for the reinforcement of vocabulary and grammar through simple

and closely monitored exercises, following intensive oral practice. (i.e. workbook of currently used curriculum materials) This written work must always be carefully corrected by the students under the teacher's supervision. One of the characteristics of written expression is the need for accuracy so students must be aware of it and form good habits from the very beginning.

It can also be used to help oral self-expression, allowing students to elaborate and "save" on paper what they want to say until their turn to speak comes. (short presentations, creation of dialogues, etc.)

This written work is likely to be most inaccurate. Ideally, teachers should take time to check all work of this type, pointing out, without heavy criticism, what the students can correct, and writing in the correct version of what is beyond the student's competence. These corrections, of course, should probably be limited to what has been emphasized in class. At the same time they can make notes of the most common errors, to deal with them later, collectively.

These activities will be a good opportunity to familiarize students with the use of reference books: dictionary, grammar-book, and, of course, their own textbook. This is one of the most useful skills where written expression is concerned.

In summary, at the beginners' and intermediate levels students can aim at being able to write down what they can say, with a reasonable degree of accuracy and acquire the habit and skill to use different reference books.

Writing for communication, in any language, is difficult and consists of much more than rendering talk on paper, as previously referred to. It calls for precision, conciseness, and variety besides demanding a high level of grammatical accuracy. A rather large proportion of students have trouble expressing themselves correctly and clearly in written English. It is unrealistic to ask them to do in French what they have trouble doing in their native tongue. Besides, unless they plan to transfer to the Core stream and major in French at the university level, there will be little need for them to write in French, for another characteristic of written expression is that, for most people, its use is limited to a small number of specific situations such as: filling out forms and making applications, writing short notes, possibly short letters of inquiry, complaint, thanks, etc.

There is no need to limit students to this utilitarian aspect of writing: all teachers have an aim beyond the strictly utilitarian, but producing this type of writing is very time consuming for teachers and students. That time could be better spent on other activities. For intellectual development and enrichment reading is a more rewarding exercise.

Rather than concentrating on development of a personal writing style, it would be more useful to make the students aware of the basic differences between the written and oral message (situation and expression) with such exercises as for instance: after oral work on a situation "Au garage", "You leave your car and write a note to the mechanics stating what you want to be done."

Grammar

Unless students plan to go to university where a good knowledge of grammatical terminology is necessary in order to discuss language itself and appreciate style, they need very little formal grammar:

W.M. Rivers[4] pg. 267:

> Experiments in the writing of English by native speakers have shown specifically that the formal study of grammar and of grammatical terminology does not improve skill in writing. Native speakers who can control the grammar of their language in speech and have been taught in elementary and secondary school how it operates still write ungrammatical and incomplete sentences. Formal grammar is an abstract study. After foreign-language students have been shown how the various parts of the language system operate, they seem to benefit more from discussion of the types of errors they are making in their writing in relation to what they were trying to say, with opportunity provided to correct their errors in context, than from a second (third, fourth, fifth?) exposition of the workings of the French pronoun system. In this way they focus on the details they partly know or do not know, rather than having their attention dispersed over a wider area of abstract concepts.

Time will be better spent on careful monitoring and discussion of errors followed by suitable exercises. In doing so students will eventually acquire some basic terminology.

Suggestions for Teachers

Course Level Descriptions

French 9 Communications

With the introduction of writing, the students' program becomes much broader in scope. This program is designed to stress oral communication while using reading and writing as support skills. It is important that French be used for as many classroom activities as possible. Translation is to be avoided.

The program must provide for a thorough review of the early structures and vocabulary to permit re-entry or initial entry students to familiarize themselves with the basic concepts of the language. The use of the first two levels of recommended materials is encouraged but many activity based learning experiences (games, songs, projects, etc.) should be incorporated into the program. While understanding and speaking are of primary importance, reading at an appropriate level and writing, where oral/aural activities need this support, can be useful to both teacher and students. The availability of good reference material is important and teachers are encouraged to help students learn how to make use of it so that they can work in small groups or individually. Such material should always be provided when written activities or tests are given. Activities which improve student interest and motivation are highly desirable.

French 10 Communications

This program is available to those students who wish to continue to study oral communication while using reading and writing for pleasure and information. There is less concentration on structure and more concentration on language usage. It should be possible for students to increase their proficiency in oral communication while becoming aware of basic language patterns to the extent that these are needed to manipulate common structures.

While levels two to four of recommended program materials provide a reasonable approach to vocabulary and structure, it may not be possible or desirable to systematically cover all items without exception. High frequency use items should always take precedence over those with a more narrow range of usage. Oral communication is always encouraged over written communication.

French 11 Communications

The student should now be capable of greater proficiency in both comprehension and oral expression. At the end of this level, he should be able to understand most French spoken by native speakers and should be able to express himself with some fluency. His level of reading should now lead him to observe more complex structures while his writing program should be gradually leading him to learn how to express his own ideas.

Care must be taken to avoid the study of structure for its own sake. Reference materials should always be available when a written assignment or test is given. Appropriate vocabulary and structural items may be selected by the teacher from levels three, four and five of recommended materials. Emphasis is given to what is practical and desirable to support oral communication and for this purpose the use of both reading materials and other stimuli such as radio, TV, audio-visual presentations, etc. is essential. Classroom activities which include discussion, dialogue, oral reports, games, etc. can do much to help the students develop their oral skills.

French 12 Communications

As his vocabulary increases, the student should be able to respond spontaneously in conversation on a practical everyday level. He should be able to recognize and use good patterns of spoken and written language. He should be able to read and discuss ordinary magazine and newspaper articles. The writing program should help him express some of his own ideas in letters, short descriptions and other simple exercises.

Stress should be placed on the student's ability to communicate desired meaning briefly and plainly in practical situations in which he may possibly find himself. However, listening comprehension is a skill which needs to be developed in classroom situations and does not consist of the memorization of words or phrases.

It would be normal to expect that most students should be able to use structures and vocabulary included in levels five and six of recommended program materials by the end of this program.

Phonetic -- Phonological
Components of Communications
versus Core program materials.

Objective: An attempt to measure and compare the opportunities for aural-oral training provided by IOPF (Levels I, II, III and IV (1-4) and Passeport Français (Books I - VI) in the following areas:

- phonological contrasts
- phonetic (non-significant) correctness
- intonation and rhythm

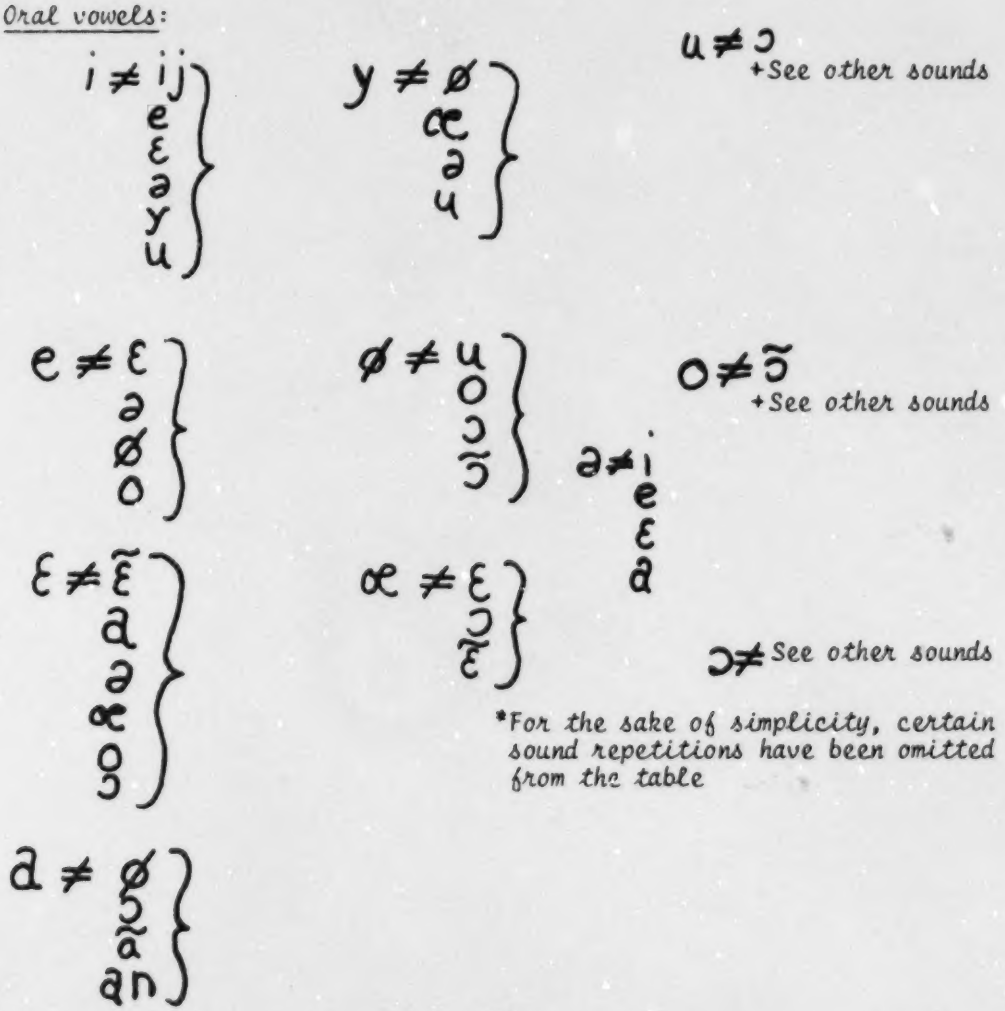
The grammatical components of the levels chosen have already been compared and equated in another section of this guide.

1. Phonological contrasts: IOPF:

Throughout the levels analyzed, IOPF offers highly structured, carefully sequenced batteries of exercises providing intensive aural-oral training on the following features and contrasts:

- English ≠ French articulation (lax ≠ tense)
- Vowel timbres and contrasts*

Oral vowels:



*For the sake of simplicity, certain sound repetitions have been omitted from the table

Nasal vowels: $\tilde{\varepsilon} \neq \begin{cases} j\tilde{\varepsilon} \\ \tilde{\alpha} \\ \tilde{\jmath} \\ \tilde{\varepsilon} \\ \tilde{\varepsilon}n \end{cases}$ $\tilde{\alpha} \neq \begin{cases} \tilde{\varepsilon} \\ \tilde{\jmath} \\ \tilde{\jmath}n \\ \tilde{\alpha} \\ \tilde{\alpha}n \end{cases}$

Consonant and semi-consonant contrasts:

$p \neq b$ $b \neq v$ $d \neq t$
$\quad\; f$

$f \neq v$ $s \neq z$ $\int \neq 3$ $\kappa \neq l$

$y i \neq w i$ $j\tilde{\varepsilon} \neq \tilde{\varepsilon}$
$\quad \neq i$ $ij \neq i$

The considerable number of exercises provided for each of the above contrasts allows for regular practice, reinforcement and review.

2. Phonetic correctness:

The above exercises in IOPF also provide for frequent practice in such phonetic, but usually non-significant, features as the [ʁ] patterns of the unstable vowel [ə], or the French [e].

3. Intonation and rhythm:

Numerous exercises practise the basic intonation patterns of French declarative, interrogative and imperative utterances composed of one or several rhythmic groups.

A careful distinction is made between liaison and linking and regular practice provided

I. Phonological contrasts: Passeport Français:

The Teacher's Pack for Book 1 of PP describes the method as offering "tightly controlled aural-oral training" (Component 1, p.1). However, the method offers far fewer exercises than IOPF specifically devoted to the development and perception of specific French sounds and sound contrasts.

Following is the list of oral and nasal vowel contrasts for which there are exercises:

Oral vowels:

e ≠ ə ≠ a ≠ ɛ

ɛ ≠ ə

a ≠ ɛ

y ≠ u

ø ≠ u

œ

ə ≠ e

u ≠ y

o ≠ ɔ

ɔ ≠ o

Nasal vowels:

ã ≠ ɔ̃

ɛ̃ ≠ ɛn

j ɔ̃

Consonants and semi-consonants:

yi ≠ wi

wa

s ≠ z

It must, nevertheless, be noted that opportunities for practice in the sound system are provided within the numerous exercises on morphology and syntax.

A reasonable number of exercises drill the major unstable vowel patterns.

2. There are frequent exercises on the intonation and liaison patterns of French throughout the six books. (Liaison and linking are considered the same phenomenon!), but only occasional exercises on rhythm.

Conclusions:

1. Passeport Français stresses communication before absolute accuracy. The relatively little emphasis placed on auditory discrimination and pronunciation exercises seems to be consistent with this objective.

2. It would not seem possible to equate the phonetic training offered by the first six books of PP with that provided by Levels I - IV of IOPF.

3. The teacher who might wish to use PP in place of IOPF and who wished to offer his students equivalent opportunities for accurate aural-oral training would have to supplement the material of PP with appropriate phonetics exercises. Such exercises could be provided, for example, by the tapes from IOPF or Les exercices systématiques de prononciation française by Monique Léon (Hachette, Paris). Prerequisite to the use of these exercises would be the selection and structuring by the teacher of a coherent body of phonological and phonetic difficulties present in the lessons of PP. The teacher might find useful in this respect the inventory of basic phonological oppositions presented by Fernand Marty on P. 86 of his manual Teaching French, Audio-Visual Pubs., Champaign, Illinois.

Possible areas of coordination between materials used for Core Programming and those used for the Communications program.

Purpose:

This is not an attempt to compare either the quality or the effectiveness of two commercial methods but to try to determine whether it is possible for a student to transfer from one to the other during his high school years, without encountering major problems.

The comparison is drawn between levels of program materials recommended for particular grades. (For purposes of comparison, materials from Ici On Parle Français and Passeport Français are used).

Grades:	9	10	11	12
IOPF	Level III (Units 1-6)	Level III (Units 7-8) Level IV (Units 1-4)	Level IV (5-8) Level V (1-2)	Level V 4-5 Level VI If possible
Passe-port	Levels I, II, III (Grades 9 & 10)	Levels III, IV, V (Grades 11 & 12)	Levels V & VI Grades 11 & 12	Levels V & VI Grades 11 & 12

This comparison will stress the grammatical elements used in both sets of materials. An analysis of the glossary does not appear essential to our purpose: the most frequently used words are those used in grammatical structure and the verbs; the vocabulary does not appear to present a particular problem for students who need to transfer.

It would probably be valuable to have a more detailed study of the two sets of materials carried out but this would necessitate a long arduous effort. This document could serve as a working paper for further study by a committee working toward such an end.

Correlation between Grades 9 and 10. A comparison is drawn between Level III of Ici On Parle Français and the three first levels of Passeport.

According to the "Teacher's Companion" of Ici On Parle Français the students who begin Level III should know 59 structures or language patterns. Twenty-three of these language patterns are not presented in Passeport, levels I, II, III. The most important of these are:

-- the pronoun "en (5)*
-- the relative pronouns qui, que (5)
-- the present tense of reflexive verbs (4)
-- the imperative (4)
-- the passé composé with avoir & être (5)
   with a pronoun object in the affirmative and negative forms (5)
   of reflexive verbs (5)
-- expressions of quantity, ex. beaucoup de (5)
-- the interrogative adjective, quel (6)
-- the comparative degree (6)

* Number indicates level of Passeport in which this language element is presented.

If one adds what is taught in the 6 first units of Level III Ici On Parle Français (Grade 9) there are, in addition to re-entry of what has been taught in Levels I and II:

-- the immediate future with reflexive verb, I am going to get dressed (4)
-- moi aussi/non plus
-- the passé composé with an adverb (il a bien travaillé; il a couru vite)
-- the passé composé with a direct object pronoun (5)
-- preposition qui verb (à qui?, avec qui?, pour qui? --) (4)
-- the imperfect tense: form, use (description, repeated action) (6)
-- the passé composé of reflexive verbs using an object (je me suis lavé les mains.)
-- the imperative of reflexive verbs (lave-toi) (5)
-- ne jamais, plus, personne, pas encore, plus rien, ni... ni
-- present et passé (6)
-- the superlative degree (6)

On the contrary:

Passeport Level I presents - depuis (3)
- on (superficially)

Passeport Level II presents - the partitive article in detail (3 Ici On Parle Français)
- the pronoun "eux"
- the possessives leur(s), notre, nos (3 Ici On Parle Français)
- the affirmative with si

Passeport Level III presents the pronoun y (5 Ici On Parle Français)

CONCLUSIONS

1. If one were to assume that all of the sequence were followed as outlined, it would not seem possible for a student to transfer at the end of a Grade 9 program using Passeport to a Grade 10 program which uses Ici On Parle Français.

Transfer from Ici On Parle Français to Passeport at the same level would not pose too many problems, even if a student achieved at a mediocre level; it would merely give him a good chance to review materials which were previously taught.

Please note:

The objectives of Ici On Parle Français are very demanding and, in practise, after Levels I and II many students are not able to master all of the information they need to have in order to begin level III. For these students, this level of work is too difficult and they tend to drop out of the French program.

One possible approach would be to select appropriate work from Levels I to IV of Passeport and then allow such students to try Level III Ici On Parle Français in Grade 10, Level IV in Grade 11 and Level V in Grade 12.

Transfers from Grades 10 and 11 (Passeport, Levels IV and V; Ici On Parle Français Level III, Units 7 & 8; Level IV, Units 1-4) will need to keep in mind that:

The most important points presented in Level III, Ici On Parle Français, Units 7 & 8 are:

-- the passé immédiat (il vient de) (6)
-- the subjunctive mood (je veux que, il faut que -- with aller, attendre, avoir, écrire, être, faire, finir, partir, prendre).

Units 1 and 2 of Level IV Ici On Parle Français further develop the language patterns already taught and extend the vocabulary:

-- review and use of the present indicative form of the imperfect tense and of the passé composé, of the negative form, of savoir vs connaître (6) and of the relative pronouns.

Units 3 and 4 present, in addition, some new language patterns, in particular the use of "si". On the contrary, Passeport Levels IV and V present the order of pronoun objects when used with different tenses (le lui --) which is dealt with in Ici On Parle Français at the end of Level IV.

2. If the student progresses normally and uses Passeport materials in Grade 10, he would find it very difficult to transfer to Ici On Parle Français in Grade 11.

Please note:

If a good student were to complete level VI of Passeport and if this material were supplemented by extra reading materials and extra "écoute" materials, he could probably follow Ici On Parle Français in Grade 11.

Supplements

SUPPLEMENTS

Books, games, etc.: For information about titles available contact the Consultant, Modern Languages, Department of Education, P.O. Box 578, Halifax B3J 2S9. Some current titles are:

Le Jardin de la Mort 1973 - Morgan Kenney, D.C. Heath
La Maison Hantée 1972 - Morgan Kenney, D.C. Heath
Conversation Dirigées MacMillan
L'Affaire du Cadavre Vivant (Gr. 11) Claude Dubois (NTC), Copp Clark
L'Affaire des Tableaux Volés (Gr. 11) Claude Dubois (NTC), Copp Clark
La Drôle d'Equipe (Gr. 10) Roussy de Sales (NTC), Copp Clark
Collection: Echos du Québec, (Gr. 9-10), R. O'Connell, Editions Aquila
Amusettes Steckman & S.K. Carew, Centre Educatif et Culturel
Textes en Français facile, Hachette

Games:

Amusons Nous word games (NTC) Copp Clark
Jeux de Grammaire word games (NTC) Copp Clark
Salut, Vale Book Company
Demandez, Vale Book Company
Questionnaire, Vale Book Company
Allez-y Language Games, Michael Buckley, Longmans

Newspapers:

Le Petit Courrier, 14 rue Kirk, Yarmouth
L'Evangéline, C.P. 1050, Moncton, N.B.

Magazines:

Passe-Partout (Gr. 10-12) } Livres, Revues et Presse Inc.
Feu Rouge } 4550 Hochelaga
Feu Vert } Montréal, Québec H1V 1C6
Bibliothèque de Travail: Ecole Moderne française, B.P. 282, 06403 Cannes Cedex, France
Quoi de Neuf (Gr. 8-10) Livres, Revues et Presse Inc., as above

Kits:

Paquettes

Records:

Chantons la France Scholastic Book Services
Chansons Traditionnelles
Les Chansons de Jan Rosol
Mony Marc Chante
Les Crocodiles

These are inexpensive, pliable records.

Media:

CBC French radio, TV shows

Sound tapes available at reasonable cost
ETV programs prepared for students of French by Nova Scotia Department of Education
These are also available for purchase on V.T.R. cassettes or tapes. Scripts are also available.

Sources of Information

1. Other guides, manuals, etc. published either in Nova Scotia or by other provinces.

2. Student Summer exchanges:

The Canadian Council of Christians and Jews
Office of the Regional Director
226 Roy Building
Halifax, N.S.
Phone 429-4544

References

1. Grittner, Frank M., Teaching Foreign Language, Harper and Row, New York, 1977

2. Rivers, Wila M., A Practical Guide to the Teaching of French, Oxford University Press, 1975

3. Rivers, Wila M., A Practical Guide to the Teaching of French, Oxford University Press, 1975

4. Rivers, Wila M., A Practical Guide to the Teaching of French, Oxford University Press, 1975